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*A REVIEW OF SOVIET WRITING
ON THE MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA*



PRICE SEVEN SHILLINGS AND SIXPENCE

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The Mizan Newsletter aims at giving an objective and balanced account of current Soviet writings on the Middle East and Africa

MIDDLE EAST

Ibn Sa'ud and the Ikhwan and The Trade Union Movement in Syria are accounts of two studies appearing in a recent Soviet collection of studies on the Arab countries (ARABSKIYE STRANY, ISTORIYA, EKONOMIKA I LITERATURA, Moscow 1960). The first of these studies is a notably unsympathetic account of Ibn Sa'ud's reign and policies, which marks a decided change in the Soviet view of this subject. The second is an account of the growth of the trade union movement in Syria prior to the establishment of the UAR and of the growth of Communist influence within it, which for the Soviet reader invites an obvious comparison with the present state of affairs in Syria.

PRAVDA's Replies to UAR Criticisms of the Soviet Union is an account of the PRAVDA article of 31st May which criticized the existing order in the UAR, and the PRAVDA article of 17th June which replied to UAR protests on the subject.

The Middle East in the Soviet Press includes Soviet reports on the treatment of Communists in the UAR, and reviews Soviet comment on the situation in Persia. An IZVESTIYA article denying that Soviet oil exports represent a threat to Middle East producer countries is also reviewed.

AFRICA

More Soviet Thoughts on African Nationalism examines Soviet reservations and misgivings on the subject of African nationalism as expressed in a new Soviet booklet on Africa.

Classes in African Society is a review of three recent Soviet articles expressing the view that classes are inherent in African society; they contribute to the Soviet thesis that Marxism-Leninism is just as applicable to Africa as to the rest of the world.

Africa in the Soviet Press includes Soviet reports on Angola, the Congo and the Algerian peace talks, and reviews Soviet comment on the All-African Trade Union Conference.

M I D D L E E A S T

IBN SA'UD AND THE IKHWAN: A SOVIET REASSESSMENT

A recent study by N.I. Proshin, *THE IKHWAN MOVEMENT IN ARABIA 1912-1930* (see contents page), while dealing only with one aspect of the modern history of Saudi Arabia, contrives to give a less favourable picture of Ibn Sa'ud's reign and policies than that presented in other Soviet writings on the subject (see *MIZAN NEWSLETTER* No.4 of 1959). Proshin may indeed have changed his own attitude; in *THE COUNTRIES OF THE ARABIAN PENINSULA* (1958) he wrote with apparent approval of the aim of Ibn Sa'ud and the Wahhabi movement to set up an "independent centralized state" in Arabia, and implied that this was part of the "national liberation movement of dependent and colonial countries" which was given impetus by the October Revolution in Russia. In his present study Proshin avoids the theme of popular support for the Wahhabi movement, and presents Ibn Sa'ud as the champion of the wealthy upper classes of the settled population, seeking to unite Arabia in their interests. In this Proshin seems to be at least partially reverting to the general view expressed in Soviet writing on the subject prior to 1955.

Before 1955 Soviet writers found little to commend in Wahhabism either as a religious movement or as a political force. The Great Soviet Encyclopaedia (1951) conceded that it originally contained national - anti-Turkish - and even "radical" ingredients, although its social content was no more significant than that of medieval Mahdist movements; but, as the official ideology of the modern feudal state of Saudi Arabia, it "seeks to preserve the colonial and feudal regime and is directed against the national liberation struggle in Arabia and against progressive democratic ideas". In 1955, however, the new Soviet attitude to eastern national movements produced a change of formula. A.I. Pershits, an ethnographer who specializes in the Arab peoples, wrote (*SOVETSKAYA ETNOGRAFIYA* No.3 of 1955) with approval of Wahhabism's opposition both to pagan survivals and to excessive Muslim ritual. Ye. Primakov, in *THE COUNTRIES OF ARABIA AND COLONIALISM* (1956), wrote of the "progressive process" of unification of the separate Arabian amirates under Wahhabi rule; Wahhabism was the "direct enemy" of Britain, which sought to preserve the partition of Arabia. Finally, I.P. Belyayev, in *AMERICAN IMPERIALISM IN SAUDI ARABIA* (1957), said that the struggle of the Wahhabis was "part of the anti-imperialist front formed in the colonies after the first world war"; Ibn Sa'ud's aim of creating a strong centralized feudal state "accorded with the aspirations to unity and independence shared by the disunited population of the amirates and tribes of Arabia".

In his account of the vicissitudes of the ikhwan, first the chosen instrument of Ibn Sa'ud's policies and later rebels against his authority, Proshin portrays Ibn Sa'ud as an opportunist manipulating a religious movement in his own interests and not scrupling to seek the aid of Britain against his own rebellious subjects. Proshin now seems to avoid any emphasis on the popular basis of the movement to unite Arabia; the "centralization of government" in the Nejd, he says, was a result of the disruption of the nomad economy, and also of the necessity to resist attempts by outside powers to dominate the Arabian peninsula. The tribal aristocracy opposed centralization, which would take away their political power and their incomes from feudal exploitation of the nomads; but the merchant class and the settled and semi-settled population wanted an end to disunity and tribal warfare and raids, which reduced the profitability of trading and agriculture. Ibn Sa'ud "expressed the interests of the wealthy upper class of the settled population".

Ibn Sa'ud's measures to direct the nomads into settled agriculture, at selected oases, Proshin refers to as a "reform", and, in one passage, as a "progressive process". There is implied criticism, however, in Proshin's account of the religious basis of the institution of the ikhwan. To carry out his reforms, he says, Ibn Sa'ud required "an ideological force", and this was provided by Wahhabism; Ibn Sa'ud "artificially" exploited the local influence of religious leaders to persuade the nomads to take to settled agriculture and to bind themselves by a religious oath to defend the Wahhabi community and subject themselves to the authority of its imam Ibn Sa'ud, for whom they would provide the nucleus of a regular army. "In this way Ibn Sa'ud intended to sanctify with the authority of religion the changes in the economic conditions of the nomads, in accordance with the interests of a feudal society and a centralized state."

Proshin's subsequent account of the success of the ikhwan settlements, of the opposition of the 'ulama to Ibn Sa'ud's innovations and growing authority, and of the tribal unrest and revolt of 1928-9, is little more than a compilation from the works of Western authors - H. Armstrong, J. Benoist-Mechin and H. Dickson - and two Arab authors, Hafiz Wahbah and Muhammad Abdullah Madi. The material taken from these authors is turned in such a way that Ibn Sa'ud is presented as solely bent on aggrandizement, wherever consonant with his obligations to Britain. Much is made of the subsidy received under the agreement of 1915 which "in effect set up a British protectorate over the Nejd":

"It is characteristic that this aid was carefully concealed from the population and was represented as a jiziyah, the tax which in the Middle Ages was paid to the Muslim sovereigns (caliphs) by their Christian and other non-Muslim subjects."

This is a very different picture from that previously presented in Soviet writings, of a movement led by Ibn Sa'ud for Arabian liberation and unity, whose principal enemy was Britain.

In his account of Ibn Sa'ud's suppression of the rebellious tribes and of the renegade ikhwan, it seems as if Proshin is at times enlisting the reader's sympathy on behalf of the latter. Ibn Sa'ud, he says, in order to raise money for his campaigns imposed fresh taxes on the ikhwan, who were already suffering from cruel exploitation by the feudal aristocracy, the merchants and the religious leaders, their rank-and-file being reduced to destitution and virtual servitude. Proshin's story is, in short, an account of dynastic struggle at the expense of a disillusioned population preyed upon by feudal shaykhs, wealthy capitalists and religious reactionaries. If anything were needed to destroy the pretence of Soviet sympathy with the rise of Saudi power in Arabia, it is to be found in this uncompromising expose.

THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT IN SYRIA

It is perhaps not to be expected that Soviet writers would comment on the present situation of the trade unions in the UAR. It was noted in SOVREMENNY VOSTOK (No.9 of 1960) that in the Syrian region of the UAR the Syrian labour law of 1946 had been annulled; under a new labour law no workers' organizations other than the official unions could be set up; strikes were declared a crime against the state; and employers were allowed to deprive workers of up to 10 days' wages (MIZAN NEWSLETTER No. 10 of 1960). No comment was made. The 1960 Annual of the Great Soviet Encyclopaedia notes briefly that a law on the reorganization of the trade unions was passed in June 1959. (The Annual also notes that in September 1959 the society for Syrian-Soviet cultural relations and the Syrian-Chinese friendship association were both dissolved.) The appearance of a fairly detailed study on the trade union movement in Syria prior to 1958 (V.M. Fedorenko, "The Situation of the Working Class and the Trade Union Movement in Syria" - see contents page) is therefore of some interest as indicating that concern for the situation of "the working class and its Party" remains a constant Soviet preoccupation. Fedorenko's emphasis on the growth of Communist influence in the Syrian trade unions prior to 1958 is a tacit pointer to its setback after the establishment of the UAR. This is not to say that the Syrian pre-UAR regime is here portrayed in any very favourable light; the improvement in labour conditions between 1954 and 1958 is represented as due to concessions wrung from the government by organized labour pressure, and not to any sympathy with labour on the part of the government.

In his present study, which is well documented from official Syrian publications and from the Syrian press, Fedorenko recounts the history of the Syrian trade union movement from the time of the French mandate to the establishment of the UAR. This he divides into four periods: from the mandate until Syria's independence in April 1946; from April 1946 to December 1947; from December 1947 to February 1954 (the overthrow of Shishakli); and from March 1954 to February 1958 (the establishment of the UAR).

Of the mandatory period Fedorenko says little, except to assert that the real value of a Syrian worker's wages fell by over a half between the First World War and 1937. He recalls briefly the beginnings of Syrian trade unionism in the 1920s, the foundation of the Communist Party of Syria and the Lebanon in 1930, and the establishment of the General Federation of Syrian Trade Unions in 1936. In the latter years of the Second World War and up to December 1947, he says, there was "a certain democratization of public life"; political parties began to function, the trade union movement expanded, the Communist Party organ SAWT ASH-SHA'B was allowed to appear, and in 1945 the Syrian trade unions sent representatives to the Congress of the World Federation of Trade Unions in Paris. But this "democratization" did not last long; by the end of 1947 persecution of Communists had started, many of the rights won by the trade unions were abolished, and SAWT ASH-SHA'B was suppressed.

Of the Syrian labour law passed in June 1946 Fedorenko says that it was "a great victory of the Syrian working class", although it had shortcomings; for instance, the provisions about holidays did not apply to enterprises with less than 10 workers, and although trade union organization was the subject of detailed provisions political activity by the trade unions was forbidden. Fedorenko quotes SAWT ASH-SHA'B for instances in which the labour law was not observed by employers, including the oil companies. He also quotes figures to show the cost of living, the rise in prices and the incidence of unemployment at this period.

The "third period" (1947-54) Fedorenko represents as one of struggle by the workers for better conditions, and he gives details of strikes and of moves by the Communist Party to bring about trade union unity (notably by the formation of the WFTU-affiliated Congress of Syrian Workers). The "fourth period", he says, was marked by the growth of unity in the trade union movement; the Congress of Syrian Workers disbanded itself and became the Left wing in the General Federation of Syrian Trade Unions; the Communist Party was permitted to operate legally; through strikes, negotiations and organized pressure on the government the workers achieved a notable improvement of their conditions; in August 1957 elections to the bureau of the trade union federation produced a majority of "representatives of the country's progressive forces"; and, although not a member of the WFTU, the federation sent representatives to the WFTU's Fourth Congress. In July 1954 pressure from the workers forced parliament to

amend the law relating to the right to strike; and in 1956 similar pressure obliged parliament to revise the provisions about political activity by trade unions.

In short, the picture here presented is one which the Soviet reader can hardly fail to compare unfavourably with the present situation obtaining in the UAR.

PRAVDA'S REPLIES TO UAR CRITICISMS OF THE SOVIET UNION

Articles in the Soviet press attacking UAR detractors of Communism are no novelty. During 1959, in particular, there were a number of them; KOMSOMOL'SKAYA PRAVDA (8.2.59) attacked Fikri Abazah for an article in AL-MUSAWWAR in which he warned Afro-Asian youth against Communism and said that "Communism is the child of imperialism"; PRAVDA (19.2.59) attacked Hasanayn Haykal for an article in AL-AHRAM in which he said that Communism, as an ideology, did not suit the conditions of the Arab East; BAKINSKIY RABOCHIY (18.11.59) denounced the book MUSLIMS UNDER COMMUNIST OPPRESSION, by the UAR writer Muhammad Sami Ashhur; and NEW TIMES (No.42 of 1959) denounced the notion, being propagated in the UAR, that imperialism had been defeated and that Communism and the Communist countries were now the enemy of the Arabs.

The PRAVDA article of 31st May An article recently published in PRAVDA (31.5.61) was more than a mere addition to the series, however. In the first place, it was in fact some time since the ideological dispute was aired in the Soviet press, although measures against Communists in the UAR had been noted (MIZAN NEWSLETTER No.2 of 1961, p.15 and No.3, p.16). In the second place, the PRAVDA article was intended to carry weight; it extended to three columns and was signed "Observer", which indicates direct official inspiration. Thirdly, PRAVDA was here taking issue with detractors not merely of Communism but of the Soviet Union itself and of Soviet aid to the UAR, which produced a striking degree of indignation and even vindictiveness on the part of the writer.

PRAVDA began by affirming the indebtedness of millions of people in Asia and Africa to Soviet moral and material aid; no one and nothing, said PRAVDA, can shake their "feelings of deep gratitude" to the Soviet Union, whose foreign policy was based on the principles of equality and non-interference in the internal affairs of other peoples; and it was therefore surprising and deplorable that in Africa there were still individuals ready to collaborate with the colonialists by propagating anti-Soviet slanders, such as those of Kamal Hamdi Abu Khayr in AL-AHRAM and of Fikri Abazah in AL-MUSAWWAR.

Dealing first with Abu Khayr, PRAVDA said that he had attempted "to identify the socialist order ... with the bloody regimes of Hitlerite Germany and fascist Italy" - a slander now discarded even by many reactionary Western propagandists. He had then gone on to attack Soviet socialism - a system which had shown its superiority over capitalism by its material achievements, thanks to which the Soviet Union had been able to give support and aid to the UAR and other newly independent countries. He had stated that the Soviet order, in his opinion, could not be regarded as true socialism since it meant "state ownership of production and depriving the individual of the right to property". In fact, said PRAVDA, in the Soviet Union the means of production belonged to society and were a possession of the people; the people governed the state through its elected representatives; the exploitation of man by man had been eliminated. When Abu Khayr spoke of the rights of "individuals" it was evident to whom he was referring - "the financial bosses and capitalists". Soviet socialism was genuine democracy.

"The 'socialism' of Abu Khayr - as he puts it, 'our socialist society' - is as far from socialism as the sky is from the earth. The order which he champions and which he calls 'socialism' is like as two peas to capitalism which is doomed by history - a society in which exploiters rule and people make speeches about democracy, while for their political beliefs progressive people languish in torture-chambers. Such 'socialism' is acceptable to any capitalist or monopolist."

PRAVDA then turned its attention to Fikri Abazah, who in AL-MUSAWWAR published open letters to the heads of the four great powers. In his letter to Khrushchev he said that the Soviet Union had received back in full measure "all that you have given us in the form of loans, aid and moral and material support"; the UAR had paid a "high price" through its policy of neutrality and non-participation in military blocs. To this PRAVDA retorted that the policy of neutrality was above all to the advantage of the Arabs themselves; "the journalistic huckster wishes to turn the blood of the martyrs of Port Said into an object of commonplace barter."

Fikri Abazah had also stated that the Soviet Union "counts on the fact that the flow of loans and assistance will automatically lead to Communism", and demanded that the Soviet Union should "put an end to the activities of your Communist Parties" in the Arab countries. To this PRAVDA replied that the Communist Parties in all countries are the creation of the peoples themselves and are not imposed from outside; that the Communist Parties have always declared themselves against the export of revolution; and that "only the ignorant Mr. Abazah" was unaware that the Soviet Communist Party did not issue directives to any other party.

After further insistence on the disinterested character of Soviet aid, with references to Soviet support of the UAR at the time of Suez and Soviet aid in the construction of the High Dam, PRAVDA quoted a statement by President Nasir recalling how the Soviet Union, at the most critical juncture for Egypt when the Western powers had turned against her, "enabled us to survive".

In conclusion, PRAVDA said that such attacks as those made by Fikri Abazah and Abu Khayr could only benefit the imperialists who hoped to isolate the Arab countries in order to reimpose their colonial fetters on them. "The freedom-loving Arabs remember their wise proverb: Do not cut down the tree that provides the shade."

The above account of the main points of the PRAVDA article, however, scarcely conveys the flavour of its remarkably vehement language. Fikri Abazah, for example, was described as "inflaming himself like a bazaar fakir into a state of trance" and writing a letter to Khrushchev which "consists entirely of hysterical shouts, each wilder than the other". The most notable feature of the article was undoubtedly its outburst about the "socialist society" of the UAR - "a society in which exploiters rule and people make speeches about democracy, while for their political beliefs progressive people languish in torture-chambers". This goes further than anything hitherto printed in the Soviet Union on the subject.

The PRAVDA article of 17th June The PRAVDA article evoked a storm of indignant comment in the UAR press and broadcasts, which denounced "the Soviet propaganda machine" not only for this article but for earlier attacks on the UAR. The Middle East News Agency (6.6.61) claimed that "in the recent stage of the campaign the official Soviet propaganda machinery launched 157 attacks on the UAR". The agency claimed that the Soviet attacks were directed, firstly, against the unity of the Egyptian and Syrian regions ("unity is portrayed as having destroyed democracy in Syria because it has banned the activity of the Communist Party"); secondly, against the UAR's independent policy of positive neutrality (the dispute coincided with the launching of the preparatory conference of non-aligned countries in Cairo). Kamil ash-Shinnawi, in an article reported by Cairo radio (9.6.61) said: "Many people are beginning to wonder if Russia, by its tirades of slander and defamation, really intends to move the UAR's name to the list of enemies".

To all this PRAVDA replied in an article on 17th June by I. Aleksandrov. Aleksandrov complained that the "true content" of the PRAVDA article of 31st May, which was "imbued with concern for the preservation and improvement of relations between our countries", had not been conveyed to the Arab public; only a "distorted interpretation" of it had been published. One would like to think, he said, that this was why the Middle East News agency had characterized the Soviet press comments as "an aggressive act ...

on the same level as imperialist activities", and had declared that "the Communists call for vassalage, not for independence". In refutation of such assertions, Aleksandrov went on to quote statements by President Nasir and Field-Marshal Amir on the subject of the Soviet Union's friendship and support for the UAR. While raising an outcry about a "propaganda campaign" against the UAR in the Soviet press, he said, the UAR organs were in fact themselves blowing up a propaganda campaign against the Soviet Union. Certain UAR trade union leaders had sent to PRAVDA "telegrams of protest", which read just like carbon copies of each other, alleging that the Soviet press, radio and trade unions were conducting a "campaign against the UAR"; complaints were made about Soviet protests in connection with the death of the Lebanese Communist Party leader Farajallah al-Hilu in prison in Damascus. But the fact was that this crime had been denounced by the peace-loving public of the whole world; why should Soviet publication of such protests be regarded as interference in the internal affairs of the UAR?

All the world knew, said Aleksandrov, that the Soviet Union pursued the Leninist policy of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries; many countries of Asia and Africa had other political systems, but this did not prevent their successful cooperation with the Soviet Union in the field of inter-state relations. But the policy of non-interference did not deprive the Soviet public and press of the right to express its opinion on this or that event. Brought up in the spirit of proletarian internationalism, the Soviet people's sympathies were on the side of fighters for the people's interests, in the first ranks of whom were the Communists; they could not remain indifferent when these patriots suffered in prison. The attacks of the Cairo and Damascus press on the Soviet Union and the Soviet socialist regime could only profit the Western imperialists who were trying to drive a wedge between the USSR and the UAR. Certain Cairo and Damascus newspapers were in fact following in the footsteps of imperialist propaganda directed against the Soviet Union. Soviet-Arab friendship had stood the test of time, and had been proved to be the most important factor in strengthening the political independence and economic progress of the Arab peoples. "The Soviet Union values this friendship, and strives for its further development and strengthening. One must suppose that the United Arab Republic also is striving for this."

THE MIDDLE EAST IN THE SOVIET PRESS

Below are reviewed reports on Middle East events appearing in Soviet newspapers during the period 17th May - 14th June.

UAR TRUD (20.5.61), quoting the Lebanese paper AN-NIDA, reported the death of Riyadh at-Turk, a member of the Syrian Communist Party, in prison in Damascus "as a result of savage torture"; according to AN-NIDA, Syrian public opinion was aroused by the savage treatment of political prisoners, and there had been a demonstration in front of the prison.

[Note: Cairo radio (23.5.61) reported that the UAR Deputy Foreign Minister had drawn the attention of the Soviet Ambassador in Cairo to the "false report" about Riyadh at-Turk published in "biased newspapers"; Riyadh at-Turk was in good health. On 5th June the Syrian authorities arranged a meeting between press correspondents and Riyadh at-Turk; he told them that he was allowed to see any visitors who wished to see him, and his health was excellent (Cairo 5.6.61). AL-AHRAM of 7th June said that it had radioed a picture of Riyadh at-Turk to PRAVDA; it called on PRAVDA to deny the false report of At-Turk's death, and asked: "Will the newspaper whose name means 'truth' in Russian live up to its name?" (Cairo 7.6.61).]

TRUD (13.6.61) finally reported the meeting between At-Turk and correspondents, "arranged in refutation of reports of his death in one of the prisons of the Syrian region of the UAR". It added that At-Turk, who was still in detention, had told correspondents that he was arrested eight months previously on the Syrian-Lebanese frontier.

For the PRAVDA article of 31st May, see the article above, "PRAVDA's Reply to UAR Criticisms of the Soviet Union". In the same issue as this article PRAVDA published the report that, according to an announcement by the Lebanese Communist Party, the Secretary-General of the party, Farajallah al-Hilu, had died in a Syrian prison as a result of torture; and for the next 10 days Soviet newspapers published reports of protests at Farajallah al-Hilu's death. (Note: According to Cairo statements, no such person as Farajallah al-Hilu was imprisoned in the UAR, and the story of his death was put out by the Lebanese Communist Party to distract attention from the failure of their fabrication about Riyadh at-Turk.) Protests reported by the Soviet press included the following: a demand (published in Beirut) for punishment of Farajallah al-Hilu's murderers, by the international committee for the defence of Farajallah al-Hilu (PRAVDA 2.6.61); a protest by the Soviet All-Union Central Committee of Trade Unions (PRAVDA 3.6.61); pilgrimages by members of the Lebanese public to Farajallah al-Hilu's birthplace (TRUD 4.6.61 and PRAVDA 7.6.61); indignant articles in the Lebanese press, including "bourgeois" newspapers

(PRAVDA 4. and 10.6.61); a message of sympathy from the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party to the Lebanese Communist Party (PRAVDA 6.6.61); a statement by two Soviet workers, members of the Soviet Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee (TRUD 8.6.61); a meeting of 15,000 persons at Farajallah al-Hilu's birthplace, at which deputies and others made speeches calling on the Lebanese authorities to protest to the UAR (PRAVDA 8.6.61); and a message of sympathy to Farajallah al-Hilu's widow from the Committee of Soviet Women (PRAVDA 9.6.61).

Iraq Tass (PRAVDA VOSTOKA 26.5.61) reported the opening of a Soviet exhibition of consumer goods in the exhibition hall of the Soviet trade mission in Baghdad.

Lebanon Tass (KAZAKHSTANSKAYA PRAVDA 28.5.61) reported that the Beirut press had condemned the Lebanese Government's decision to ban the Soviet film about Gagarin's space flight because of its Communist content.

TRUD (30.5.61) reported a wave of strikes in the Lebanon; chemists' shops had been closed because the population, angered by the rise in the price of medicines, had threatened to break into them; the press was demanding measures to curb rising prices and the introduction of social insurance, old age and disablement pensions, and free elementary education.

For an IZVESTIYA attack on Emile Bustani for his article "Soviet Oil Threatens the Middle East", see the item at the end of this section, "Soviet Oil Exports and the Middle East Countries".

Israel Further Soviet comment on the Eichmann trial (see MIZAN NEWSLETTER No.5 of 1961) insisted that every attempt was being made to cover up the complicity with Eichmann of persons now occupying important posts in Western Germany; this was arousing growing indignation among the Israeli public (KAZAKHSTANSKAYA PRAVDA 12.5.61; KRASNAYA ZVEZDA and BAKINSKIY RABOCHIY 23.5.61).

KRASNAYA ZVEZDA (21.5.61) published an article by A. Kostrov alleging that Israel was in the grips of a "militarist fever". Ben Gurion, in an interview with DAVAR, had affirmed the necessity for "maintaining the qualitative superiority of Israel's armed forces"; on 20th April Israel had deliberately broken the 1949 armistice terms by bringing troops into Jerusalem and holding a military parade there; big military manoeuvres, with the participation of reservists, were now being held, the sudden call up of reservists having been intended to test readiness for rapid mobilization; incidents on Israel's borders with the Arab countries had recently become more frequent; and a second atomic reactor was now being secretly constructed in Israel, with financial and technical aid from the

USA, France, Britain and Western Germany - all members of NATO. "The rulers of Israel, encouraged by their Western allies, are embarking on a foolhardy adventure that is extremely dangerous for the countries of Asia and Africa and not less dangerous for Israel herself."

Israel's relations with the Afro-Asian countries were the subject of an article in TRUD (26.5.61) by A. Kostrov. The US trade union leader Walter Reuter, said Kostrov, had recently visited Israel and had affirmed that Israel and the Histadrut could play a very important role as a "bridge" between the West and the new states of Asia and Africa, since there was no element of suspicion in these countries' attitude towards Israel. Similarly at the meeting of the council of the Socialist International in Haifa in April the Western Right-wing social democrats had made it clear that they expected their Israeli colleagues to assume the leadership of the social democrat movement in Asia and Africa, and to undermine the front of the liberation struggle. But the Afro-Asian peoples knew the true nature of their Israeli "friend", and, as the Casablanca conference of January showed, they recognized Israel as an accomplice of the colonial powers.

PRAVDA (2.6.61) published a message of greetings from the Soviet Communist Party to the Israeli Communist Party on the occasion of the latter's 14th congress. PRAVDA (2, 3, 4 and 6.6.61) published short reports of speeches made at the congress.

Turkey The first anniversary of the new regime in Turkey was the occasion for an IZVESTIYA article (28.5.61) reviewing the events of 27th May 1960 and the subsequent course of Turkish policy. Under the Bayar-Menderes regime, said PRAVDA, Turkey had become "one of the forward bases of the aggressive forces of imperialism in the Middle East"; the former government had offered Turkish territory for the establishment of US and NATO bases, including rocket bases. Gen. Gursel had affirmed that his government intended to revive the peace-loving traditions of Ataturk and to put an end to the policy of ill-will and open enmity towards the Soviet Union. One might have expected that the new government would take practical steps in this direction. However, since the end of last year there had been reports of Turkish agreement to the installation of atomic rockets in Turkish territory. "Striving for the establishment of good-neighbourly relations, the Soviet public would have liked to believe that the new leadership of Turkey would not allow the country to be drawn into dangerous adventures threatening the cause of peace." Further, in the UN General Assembly the Turkish delegates had shown themselves to be "in close unity with the representatives of the colonialists". The Soviet people did not regard these circumstances as insuperable obstacles to the further improvement of Soviet-Turkish relations, but nevertheless they seriously impeded such relations. "It is high time for the ruling circles of Turkey to pass from words to practical actions." In the past year

there had been satisfactory developments in the fields of trade and communications; but the possibilities of further development of economic relations were far from exhausted. Turkey today was not what it was before the events of spring 1960, and therefore the attempts of certain Turkish politicians to return to the situation existing under Menderes were doomed to failure. The Soviet Union expected from the new leadership concrete measures to improve relations, in accordance with the policy of the great Atatürk.

The killing of a Turkish soldier in an affray with US troops in Sinop was the subject of an indignant article in KRASNAYA ZVEZDA (23.5.61), which said that the Turkish public was angrily demanding the punishment of the guilty persons; "hundreds of crimes" had been committed with impunity by US officers and soldiers since they arrived in Turkey.

Persia The situation in Persia was closely followed in the Soviet press. The main emphasis was on general popular dissatisfaction with the regime, the spread of the strike movement, and the growth of the movement for a neutral foreign policy.

Tass (PRAVDA VOSTOKA 17.5.61) noted that Ali Amini had denied rumours that Persia would withdraw from CENTO, and had affirmed that Persia would remain loyal to her international obligations. PRAVDA (19.5.61) and IZVESTIYA (20.5.61) reported that a meeting of over 60,000 held in Tehran had applauded Musaddeq's services to the Persian people; IZVESTIYA quoted a report that Musaddeq was now in the capital. IZVESTIYA (20.5.61) quoted an article in ATESH blaming Persia's miserable condition on the gulf existing between the government and the people, and an article in DIPLOMAT by Ahmad Aramesh, former head of the Planning Organization under Sharif Emami's government, who denounced US policy and methods. Tass (TURKMENSKAYA ISKRA 25.5.61) reported Ali Amini's appeal to landlords to surrender large holdings to the peasants, in return for compensation; the government, said Tass, was afraid of possible risings by peasants "which might lead to an explosion against the feudal order and the existing regime". IZVESTIYA (26.5.61) reported a manifesto by the Persian Afro-Asian Solidarity Association calling for Persia's withdrawal from military blocs; the secretary of the association, IZVESTIYA noted, was the present Minister of Industry. PRAVDA (28.5.61) reported an article in DUNYA-YE JADID which expressed the view that American influence was a far greater threat to Persia than the alleged peril of Communism. BAKINSKIY RABOCHIY (31.5.61) quoted NOVOYE VREMYA No.22 of 1961 for an article alleging that Ali Amini's appointment as Premier had been made on the instruction of Mr. Harriman, who visited Tehran in March, in return for a new US loan. Under the heading "The movement for neutrality in Persia is growing" BAKINSKIY RABOCHIY (31.5.61) quoted Persian newspaper articles comparing unfavourably the position of Persia as a member of CENTO with that of neutral countries such as Afghanistan.

PRAVDA reported (5.6.61) a statement by the former Majles President Hekmat declaring that he had always been against Persia's participation in CENTO, and (10.6.61) a statement by Ahmad Aramesh, on behalf of a "group of progressives", affirming that Sharif Emami's dismissal had been contrived by foreign powers because of his desire for rapprochement with the USSR; Aramesh called for a neutral and independent policy. Tass (PRAVDA 22.5.61) reported the formation of a new political organization, the "Movement for the Freedom of Persia", which supported the policy of the National Front and of Musaddeq, and stood for Persian neutrality.

Malta The situation in Malta was the subject of an article in IZVESTIYA (11.6.61) by V. Kassiss. The peaceful people of Malta, he said, had seen their island "transformed" to meet British strategic needs; the fields of the peasants had been given up to landing-strips, pastures had made way for soldiers' barracks, and underground granaries had been turned into stores for atomic bombs. Repeated mass strikes by the Maltese showed their determination to win their lawful rights, despite every show of force by the British Navy. The serious risings of 1958 and the Maltese people's demand for independent status had obliged the British Government to set up a constitutional commission; but the "new" Constitution which it produced had been denounced by the Nationalist Party and even more strongly by the Labour Party; indeed, what "self-government" could there be for Malta if Britain continued to occupy bases and military installations in the island? In view of Maltese opposition, London decided to bring its "long-range artillery" into action. "The militant Church obscurantists launched a furious campaign. Brandishing the Cross, they threaten patriots with exclusion from church, hatch plots and weave a net of intrigues." The Labour Party at its recent conference had accused the bishops of collusion with the British Government in order to distract attention from the unemployment problem and to make the people stop supporting the Labour Party and agree to the imposition of the new Constitution. It recently became known that an "anti-Communist league" which had been "hastily knocked together by the obscurantists in surplices" had tried to persuade the Police Commissioner to institute criminal proceedings against the Labour Party leader Dom Mintoff for his attacks on the Church leaders and the Archbishop of Malta. "But however much the Holy Fathers huff and puff, and whatever measures their patrons resort to, they cannot suppress either by the Cross or the sword the Maltese people's movement for sovereignty and independence and for the right to be free for ever from the threat of aircraft-carriers, atomic bombs and British soldiery."

Soviet oil exports and the Middle East countries An article by Emile Bustani in WORLD PETROLEUM, according to which Soviet oil exports represented a threat to Middle East producer countries, was the subject of an article in IZVESTIYA (31.5.61) by B. Rachkov. Bustani, said Rachkov, had pointed out that by 1965 Soviet oil production would reach 230-240 million tons, and this represented a vast potential threat to the Arab countries; such a quantity of oil could not be used in the Soviet Union, and it would flood foreign markets and drive out Arab oil. To this Rachkov replied that the USSR had indeed become a large exporter of oil and petroleum products; in the last Five-Year Plan the export of Soviet oil to capitalist countries had risen by 15 million tons. But this in no way prevented the growth of oil exports from the Middle East countries, which during the same period had risen by 100 million tons. World consumption of petroleum was growing so rapidly that the appearance of Soviet oil on foreign markets could not do any harm to any producer, and "this trend will be maintained in the future". Another reason why the growth of Soviet oil production need not frighten exporters was that most of the increased production would be absorbed in the USSR owing to its rapidly expanding economy. In the present Seven-Year Plan industrial production would increase by 80 per cent, the share of oil and gas in fuel consumption would increase from 31 to 51 per cent, and four or five million new motor vehicles would be manufactured, in addition to more than a million tractors, and thousands of locomotives, ships, aircraft, etc. As for over-plan production of oil, which Bustani was so concerned about, over-plan production of machines and factories would take account of this. "Thus, quite apart from the absence of any desire on the part of the Soviet Union to exclude Arab petroleum from foreign markets, all the ravings on this subject have no economic foundation. Evidently these fables were needed by the imperialists of the USA and Britain in order to create a dispute between the USSR and the Arab countries on the subject of oil exports." The rest of the article was an attempt to depict Emile Bustani as a trusty collaborator of "the oil monopolies" against the interests of the Arabs.

A F R I C A

MORE SOVIET THOUGHTS ON AFRICAN NATIONALISM

A new Soviet booklet on Africa, *THE NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENT IN AFRICA*, by A.M. Sivolobov (Moscow, Izdatel'stvo "Znaniye", 1961), gives an up-to-date picture of the trend of Soviet thinking on political prospects in Africa. In particular it shows that Soviet thinkers are anxious to arrive at a correct estimate of the precise "democratic" content, in the Soviet sense, of African nationalism.

Both at the outset of the booklet and in its conclusion Sivolobov emphasizes the fundamental role of the working class in the African liberation movement. In this movement, he says, the working class is "the most consistent force"; its importance is shown by the fact that the number of industrial and transport workers in the whole of the African continent has increased from 2 million in 1940 to 11 million today. Of the peasants, Sivolobov says that according to Leninism there can be no "anti-imperialist people's revolution" without the peasant masses; only by struggle for the elimination of feudal landownership and exploitation can the peasants be drawn into the national liberation movement. Accordingly, when Sivolobov comes to consider the role of the "national bourgeoisie" in the liberation movement, he regards it from the point of view of the interests of the worker and peasant proletariat.

As examples of Africa's "rising national bourgeoisie" Sivolobov cites Azikiwe of Nigeria, Olympio of Togo, Senghor of Senegal and Tsiranana of Madagascar. Where this national bourgeoisie takes up an anti-imperialist position and fights actively for state independence, he says, it "plays a progressive role"; but, with the advance of the liberation movement, it begins to show its "dual nature" and its limitations. This is particularly shown in its approach to the agrarian problem. The national bourgeoisie regards feudal and foreign landownership as a barrier to political independence, and therefore African nationalist parties put forward demands for the abolition of such landownership. But experience has shown that some of the national bourgeoisie are not always disposed to support the peasants' demands:

"Thus, for example, in January 1959 a rising broke out in the Lake Province of Tanganyika and the peasants began to seize land. When the peasants' struggle began to assume wide proportions, the leadership of the Tanganyika African National Union condemned these revolutionary activities of the peasants and did not support them."

Sivolobov then proceeds to criticize "the leaders of some bourgeois political parties in Africa" who aim at achieving independence by constitutional and non-violent means. These leaders, he says, "claim that the best if not the only way to national liberation is by gradual constitutional reforms within the existing laws framed by the colonialists, and by means of negotiations and agreements with the metropolitan governments"; some of them "condemn on principle the method of revolutionary violence". Against this Sivolobov proffers no detailed argument, but confines himself to the assertion that the wrongness of this conception is proved by the history of the African independence movement.

There are, says Sivolobov, "two tendencies" in the African independence movement; one is the tendency of certain national bourgeois parties to acquiesce in mere "formal independence", without due regard for the fundamental interests of their people; the other is the tendency of "progressive" national leaders to aim at making independence a reality by putting their countries' natural resources at the services of their peoples. The representatives of the first tendency "try to remain in the British Commonwealth or the French Community"; the French agreement with Madagascar, which leaves the control of defence, currency and communications in French hands, is an example of this "anti-national tendency"; and "Britain has established similar unequal relations with Nigeria". Examples of the second tendency are Guinea, Ghana and Mali (Sivolobov devotes a page to Guinea, and a short paragraph to Ghana, with mention of Mali).

In the context of his references to Guinea, Ghana and Mali Sivolobov refers to the prospects for the creation in Africa of "national democracies" - states which, according to the formula of the 1960 world Communist conference in Moscow, stand for "democratic" reforms and an anti-imperialist foreign policy (MIZAN NEWSLETTER No.1 of 1961). The creation of such "national democracies", says Sivolobov, will mean that "the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal and democratic revolution" has reached its final stage, when advantage can be taken of the possibilities for "transition to the progressive non-capitalist road of development" in the way which will be "most painless for the peoples" concerned.

In the final chapter of the booklet Sivolobov examines the character of African nationalism. He finds that, in general, African nationalism deserves support, but there is a kind of nationalism which constitutes a "danger".

African nationalism, says Sivolobov, has a "healthy democratic character" in that it expresses the protest of the masses against imperialist oppression and their striving for independence and "radical social transformations". In the struggle against colonialism a growth of national awareness takes place, and more and more of the masses are "awakened from medieval slumber" and drawn into a movement against

backwardness and reaction; this "gives to African nationalism a democratic and progressive content". As for the African national bourgeoisie, many of them are drawn by their economic interests into the national liberation movement. The democratic forces, "and in the first place the rising popular parties, the growing Communist Parties and Marxist groups", support nationalism in the direction of attaining national freedom, achieving victory over imperialism and feudalism, and "awakening among the masses feelings of human dignity".

On the other hand, Sivolobov goes on, "the democratic forces do not support the attempts of the colonialists, their agents and the Right-wing forces of the local bourgeoisie to use nationalism as an instrument of national egoism and national exclusiveness"; such a kind of nationalism presents a serious danger for the political and social liberation of the African peoples. It is particularly dangerous at this period, "when the bourgeois democratic liberation movement in Africa has attained great strength, while Communist and workers' parties or Marxist groups in the countries south of the Sahara have only begun to appear". The progressive democratic forces "are striving to direct the nationalist movement into the only correct channel" in which the interests of the people as a whole and the interests of different classes are combined, in the struggle for independence and economic progress against colonialism, backwardness and reaction. At this point Sivolobov goes on to speak of the growth and importance of the working-class movement in Africa.

Soviet writers do not often refer to African nationalism as such, but prefer to speak of the African "national liberation movement"; the two are evidently not regarded as identical. The "national liberation" aspect of nationalism earns Soviet approval; and in his estimate of the favourable influence of nationalism on the masses Sivolobov is here taking, by Soviet standards, a generous attitude. But, whatever its "democratic" content, nationalism cannot be regarded by Communists as a self-sufficient ideology, in so far as it has no class roots. Not only is national self-assertiveness not enough, in the Soviet view, but it can represent a danger by leaving no room for the assertion of the rights of the masses. This presumably is the sense of Sivolobov's strictures on "national egoism and national exclusiveness"; as he points out, the Communist movement in Africa has a long way to go, and, in Soviet eyes, the entrenchment of "bourgeois" nationalism in too strong a position at this early stage can only be regarded with misgivings.

CLASSES IN AFRICAN SOCIETY

When examining the case for Marxist-Leninist "scientific socialism" in Africa in his recent booklet AFRICA LOOKS AHEAD (Moscow 1960) (see supplement to MIZAN NEWSLETTER No.4 of 1961), Dr. I.I. Potekhin dismisses the claim by the exponents of "African socialism" that African society is classless. Soviet writers in fact depict African society as a complicated mixture of tribal, feudal and capitalist elements with a number of the feudal characteristics masked by various tribal survivals. Three recent articles in SOVETSKAYA ETNOGRAFIYA have dealt with different aspects of this question. M.I. Braginskiy in "Social Advances in Tropical Africa after the Second World War" in SOVETSKAYA ETNOGRAFIYA No.6 of 1960 discusses the emergence of the working class, national bourgeoisie and intelligentsia, that is, the classes of a capitalist society. V.Ya.Katsman, in "The Growth of Property Differentiation among the African Peasantry of Tanganyika after the Second World War" in No.1 of 1961, shows the existence of feudal and capitalist elements among the peasants of Tanganyika; and A.S. Orlova, in "The Place and Role of the Traditional Authorities of African Society" in No.6 of 1960, claims that class societies existed in Africa south of the Sahara even before the appearance of Europeans in the 15th century.

The new social forces Braginskiy begins his article by remarking that, although external political factors such as the consolidation of the socialist system and the overthrow of colonial regimes in Asia and Africa have greatly assisted the national-liberation movement, "the liberation of Africa from the imperialist yoke would have been impossible without the substantial social and economic advances which have taken place on the continent in recent years". After the war, he says, "there was a marked acceleration in the process of the dissolution of tribal relations and the formation of new social forces in the working class, national bourgeoisie and intelligentsia". This was reflected in the growth of the towns; the number of permanent town-dwellers increases every year and these Africans break with their narrow tribal life and begin to develop a national consciousness. Braginskiy says that a peculiarity of the colonial countries in Africa is that capitalist relations were introduced from the outside. This means that with a weakly developed national bourgeoisie there is a fairly numerous working class employed in foreign undertakings. He points out however that the majority of the workers are not permanent proletarians but seasonal workers who return to their villages; they need money to pay taxes and buy certain necessary goods but they are not in a position to break with the land, since wages are too low to feed their families and there is no provision for old-age or disability pensions. He goes on to say that seasonal working has a negative effect on the class-consciousness of the workers and the formation of trade unions, but on the other hand it provides a link between urban and

rural areas and brings the peasants into the national liberation movement. None the less, the number of permanent proletarians has grown since the war, a trade union movement has come into being and strikes have brought political concessions as well as economic gains. Braginskiy remarks that Communist Parties, "the highest form of organization of the working class", do not at present exist in Africa south of the Sahara, but the African Independence Party in Senegal has declared that it is guided by Marxist-Leninist teaching, and the ideas of Marxism-Leninism are spreading. He concludes that "at the present time the working class, which feels most keenly the yoke of the colonialists, is the most organized force in Africa. This determines its special role in the national liberation movement."

Braginskiy deals more briefly with the national bourgeoisie and intelligentsia. He says that the growth of the national bourgeoisie has been cramped by the dominance of foreign capital in the economy, and therefore it supports the national liberation movement to improve its own position. This gives rise to the singular situation in which the contradictions between the working class and bourgeoisie are not of cardinal importance and a united anti-imperialist front can be formed. As for the intelligentsia, which includes office employees, teachers and medical personnel, they come from the better-off sections of the population. Of those few educated abroad, says Braginskiy, many return imbued with ideas of independence and become politicians, but owing to their bourgeois or aristocratic origin "as a rule ... they express the interests of the bourgeoisie". However, like the national bourgeoisie, "at the present time" they play an active part in the liberation struggle. The other two sections of the population mentioned by Braginskiy are the "feudal elements and tribal aristocracy" who play a reactionary role for instance in Northern Nigeria and Buganda, and the peasants who are still too much affected "by survivals of tribal relations and the influence of reactionary chiefs" to play as important a part in the independence movement as they should.

Property and class differentiation among the peasants Katsman accuses the "bourgeois press" of dealing "very little, and often extremely tendentiously" with the situation of the peasants in Tanganyika; but, he says, from the scanty material available one can make out "certain tendencies in the development of the African village". Firstly, land relations have changed. Land can now be inherited, leased and among some tribes sold, although in all cases the land remains with the commune and it is rather the right to cultivate it that is transferred. Secondly, although subsistence farming still dominates the scene, the introduction of cash and commodity relations has led to the cultivation of export crops, the sale of foodstuffs and livestock on the internal market and large-scale seasonal working among certain tribes and peoples. "The introduction of cash and commodity relations", says Katsman, "inevitably leads to property

differentiation among the peasantry." Various reports show that some Africans have land holdings many times larger than the average and as a result in some tribes the younger generation are without land and forced to engage in seasonal work. This is due to property differentiation rather than to the increase in population, as many "bourgeois" authors assert. Further, says Katsman, figures for African peasant incomes also show substantial variations between rich and poor, particularly in areas where export crops are grown. This allows one to speak of "capitalist elements" among the African peasants of Tanganyika.

Katsman goes on to deal with class relations. He says that the peoples and tribes of Tanganyika are at various stages of social development - the dissolution of tribal relations, feudal relations and the first stages of capitalist relations. Most African peasants are independent producers closely connected with the commune, but there are various forms of disguised feudal and capitalist exploitation. Katsman cites examples such as specific offerings to chiefs for land distribution, the appropriation by chiefs of communal land, the conditions on which livestock are leased to fellow tribesmen by the chiefs and richer peasants, and the growing custom of cash payment for work on the fields of a fellow commoner under the tribal mutual aid system. Katsman maintains that the cooperative movement among producers of export crops is essentially capitalist. The British administration supported it, at first because it facilitated the operations of the monopoly purchasing companies and later, in the post-war years, because faced with the decline in the traditional authority of the chiefs they counted on it as a product of the "middle classes" to be the "new bulwark of foreign capital". Katsman states that the cooperatives are used by the growing agricultural bourgeoisie, and the fact that the cooperatives own processing factories employing hired labour is further proof of their capitalist nature. Moreover Lord Hailey and others have noted that the cooperatives are based on individualism and the profit motive. It is therefore false to claim that they are based on the tribal custom of mutual aid, as some bourgeois authors do in order to belittle African capabilities of independent development. The last subject dealt with by Katsman is the growing demand for the individualization of landholding. This has arisen because "capitalist relations, forming within the African commune, have produced a new attitude towards the land" which is now planted with perennial cash crops. Katsman concludes that "property and class differentiation exacerbates relations in the village and makes the material situation of the main mass of the peasantry worse".

The traditional authorities Orlova's article on "chiefs" in African society is the most interesting of the three. It is published for discussion and she makes clear that the views expressed in it are her own. The classical form of a developed communal and clan society, she says, as described by Morgan, was one of blood-relationship and primitive

democracy where the chief was only the first among equals. To apply the name "chief" therefore to the rulers of the various medieval states which existed in the Western Sudan, on the Guinea coast and elsewhere when Europeans first appeared in the 15th century was wrong since these states were class, if not feudal, societies and heads of state had replaced chiefs, although there were "unusually tenacious survivals of the tribal system". The other, less populous regions of Africa "were at various stages of the dissolution of the tribal system" and "only with reference to this part of Africa and only for this period can we speak of tribal chiefs". Europeans penetrating into the interior, says Orlova, found "social relations far from primitive democracy" with property inequality, a developed barter trade, domestic slavery, powerful hereditary chiefs and the beginnings of fixed tributes and small territorial unions, in other words the beginnings of class society. The European slave trade in the 16th - 18th centuries "deformed" African development. Orlova considers that, in addition to such consequences as the disappearance of whole peoples, large-scale displacements and intermingling of the population, the decline of the economy and the "late and very violent development of the slave-owning way of life", one of the most important results of the slave trade was "the considerable destruction of tribal organization among a number of backward African peoples" with its "impetus towards the development of class relations". At the same time the slave trade prevented the formation of states and led to anarchy and territorial fragmentation. By the time of European colonization in the middle of the 19th century, therefore, Orlova says, "the bases of tribal organization were undermined and other links and associations had come to take their place based on territorial signs and not on the principle of blood-relationship".

Orlova then goes on to describe the different methods of the French, British and Belgian colonial administrations. The French, she says, chose to destroy existing state and tribal unions and divide the country into districts and cantons headed by so-called "chiefs". These were officials who were not connected with the population. As long as they were in power, they had certain rights and could exploit the subject population. "It seems to me", says Orlova, "that the fact that the authority of these official chiefs was imposed on the population from above and that it was temporary cannot and should not conceal from us the purely feudal character of this authority." Where the French retained the old ruling dynasties the rulers kept their hereditary power by unconditional submission to the French and carried on "unrestrained feudal exploitation of the population". Post-war reforms hardly touched the institution of "chiefs", whose exploitation the people hated the more because "it was not ... disguised by ancient traditional institutions and was openly connected with the colonial regime". Orlova says that the independence struggle is inevitably bound up with the struggle against the chiefs as "bearers of reactionary tendencies", and their abolition

in Guinea in 1957 was a blow against the French "and at the same time (as it seems to me) the conclusion of an anti-feudal revolution of very original form and method".

Orlova asserts that the British used indirect rule, recreating the traditional authorities where necessary, in order: 1) to find the most reliable social stratum; 2) "to set up a flexible and cheap administrative apparatus"; and 3) "to try not only to preserve the most backward social and economic relations in Africa but, where possible, to turn history back, to return the peoples to a stage of development they had already passed through and revive ... the tribal organization". She credits the British with skill in making use of local conditions, instancing the different arrangements in South, East and West Africa. According to Orlova the Hausa emirates of Northern Nigeria and the states in the Lakes Region are clearly feudal. Their rulers collaborate with the British and their influence is enormous, but their authority rests not so much on colonial support as "on the power of tradition and a whole complex of religious views". Unfortunately "the Africans themselves seldom realize" that the national liberation movement in these countries is closely tied up with the anti-feudal movement and "the authority of the feudal aristocracy has not been finally unmasked in the eyes of the people as in most former French colonies". Orlova says that the question of the essence of the traditional authorities originating from the tribal aristocracy is much more complicated, but, after discussing in detail the Wasukuma of British East Africa and the Mende "tribe" in Sierra Leone as examples, she reaches the conclusion that "with all the tenacity of certain forms of organization peculiar to tribal society, the Mende, like the Wasukuma in East Africa, even before colonization had set up small state (and not tribal) unions which reflected the beginnings of the dissolution of society into classes" and "the British reinforced by law the state nature of the chiefs' authority".

Of the Belgians Orlova says that they combined direct and indirect rule, that the chiefs in their territories were undoubtedly feudal, and that by playing them off against each other the Belgians established a devoted local administration which partly accounted for the slow start to the national liberation movement in the Congo.

National and class consciousness Thus all three of these Soviet writers are set upon proving that classes are inherent in African society. Braginskiy seeks to estimate the degree of organization of the working class; Katsman insists that classes have developed among the peasants; and Orlova maintains that a basic part of the independence struggle is the struggle against a long established African feudal class. Unlike Dr. Potekhin, these writers do not state in so many words that they are taking issue with those African ideologists who maintain that African society is classless; but they nevertheless contribute to his polemic

against the notion that Africa is different from the rest of the world and can turn its back on Marxist-Leninism. They also make it clear that, at this early stage, Soviet writers are already looking beyond the initial stage of national solidarity in the independence movement to the succeeding stage of class conflict which, in their view, will lead to the dominance of the working class and of "proletarian" ideology.

It might have been thought, perhaps a year ago, that the Soviet attitude would remain one of complacent approval of the "anti-imperialist" direction of African nationalism, without complicating the picture by thrusting the issue of class antagonisms into it. But it is evidently Soviet policy in this matter to look ahead and to make it clear that, for the Soviet scheme, the development of class consciousness is at least as important as the development of national consciousness.

AFRICA IN THE SOVIET PRESS

Below are reviewed reports on African affairs appearing in the Soviet press during the period 2nd May - 7th June 1961.

Conferences

The Cairo conference of neutral countries A brief Tass dispatch (KRASNAYA ZVEZDA 7.6.61) on the opening of the preparatory conference of neutral countries in Cairo appears to be all that has been so far published in the Soviet press on this subject.

The Cairo conference of the Casablanca group IZVESTIYA's correspondent Kondrashov (7.5.61) sent a dispatch on the conference of Foreign Ministers of the Casablanca Charter countries which ended in Cairo on 6th May; he noted that the conference had adopted a "negative" attitude towards the Monrovia conference of 8th May "at which, to all appearances, those African countries will be represented which are inclined towards compromise with the colonial powers or are directly subjected to them".

The All-African Trade Union Conference The Soviet press welcomed the holding of the All-African Trade Union Conference in Casablanca, and expressed approval of its decisions. A Soviet delegation led by A.A. Bulgakov, Secretary of the Soviet trade union council, attended the conference in the capacity of observers (TRUD 24.5.61). In a long TRUD article (24.5.61) on the conference N. Gavrilov said that the calling of

the conference was a great success for Africa's young working class, and a defeat for the enemies of unity of the African proletariat. He recalled that the "secret British Cabinet paper" on the African trade union movement (a forgery - see MIZAN NEWSLETTER No.3 of 1961, p.36) had called for measures to prevent the formation of an All-African Trade Union Federation, and he condemned ICFTU moves for a regional ICFTU-affiliated organization, and in particular the recent Brazzaville conference of trade union leaders, who "were only concerned to drive more deeply a wedge between African trade unions and to prevent the departure of their delegates for the Casablanca conference". At Casablanca, he said, the ICFTU dissentients were relying on a certain number of African trade union leaders "ready to compromise with the foreign monopolies and the colonialists"; among them was Tom Mboya, Secretary of the Kenya trade union federation, "who, as was noted in the secret British Cabinet paper, had established an 'understanding' with the Americans". Gavrilov noted that admission of trade unions to the newly formed AATUF would be made dependent on their secession from "non-African trade union organizations" /the WFTU and the ICFTU/, so that they could concentrate their efforts on "purely African problems". The ICFTU, on the one hand, attacked this requirement, which deprived them of "the possibility of interference"; on the other hand, "the independence of the AATUF will not mean the isolation of the African working class from the international trade union movement". Sekou Toure had declared at the session of the preparatory committee that the new organization would cooperate with "all workers' organizations of the world which come out in defence of the workers' rights".

TRUD's special correspondent in Casablanca (30.5.61) said that every effort had been made by Mr. Irving Brown and the delegation of observers from ICFTU to persuade delegates to maintain their ICFTU connections; PRAVDA's special correspondent (6.6.61) said that he had tried to bribe delegates. PRAVDA said that the successful conclusion of the conference, and the adoption of a charter proclaiming the basic principles of the AATUF, were a victory for African unity and independence against the forces of colonialism.

The UNESCO conference in Addis Ababa A Soviet delegation led by S.A. Azimov, Foreign Minister of the Uzbek SSR, attended the UNESCO conference on African education in the capacity of observers. The Soviet press reported speeches made by him and by M.M. Mekhtizade, Education Minister of the Azerbaydzhan SSR, on the subject of Soviet experience in education and Soviet willingness to assist African education programmes. IZVESTIYA published a short account of the conference by a special correspondent, Ye. Ivanova. (BAKINSKIY RABOCHIY 18.5.61; PRAVDA VOSTOKA 21. and 15.5.61; IZVESTIYA 26.5.61)

The African journalists' conference Under the headings "For the unity of African journalists" and "Down with colonialism" PRAVDA (21. and 26.5.61) published accounts of the speeches and resolutions of the first conference of journalists of African countries, held in Bamako.

Angola

Events in Angola were given great publicity in the Soviet press, according to the pattern described in the last issue of this Newsletter.

On 27th May PRAVDA and other newspapers published a Soviet Government statement on Angola, of some 1,500 words. According to this statement, the Portuguese had "unleashed a cruel colonial war" against the people of Angola, who were fighting for national independence and whose liberation from colonialism had been demanded by the UN General Assembly. For centuries the rulers of Portugal had "played the role of despots and butchers" in Angola and the other Portuguese colonies; "lawlessness, cruel exploitation, hunger and poverty reign in Angola"; Portuguese troops were now "burning whole villages to the ground and sowing death and destruction everywhere"; "the government of the fascist dictator Salazar has now openly stepped into the role of an international criminal and bandit who takes no heed of the decisions of the UN but tears all such decisions to pieces"; in doing so it was relying on the support of its NATO allies and above all of those colonial powers and British, West German, Belgian and US monopolies who "together with the Portuguese beasts of prey have been pumping wealth out of Angola and other African colonies for a long time". The Soviet Government considered it the duty of all states and peoples to compel Portugal to end the "predatory colonial war" in Angola and to comply with the UN declaration on independence for colonial peoples. Portugal's actions were a serious threat to peace, and the UN must take effective measures to stop them. The world must show its condemnation and contempt for the rulers of Portugal; "the hand of the executioners threatening hundreds of thousands of human lives must be stayed and the people of Angola must be saved from mass extermination". An authoritative international investigation into the situation in Angola, "with the participation of African countries in the first place", must be carried out, and "other measures must also be taken to help the struggling people of Angola". The people of Angola had the "all-out support" of the Soviet people, and the Soviet Union would not remain indifferent to their fate.

Further protests by Soviet organizations were reported. These included the Soviet Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee (TRUD 20.5.61 and PRAVDA 22.5.61) and the Soviet Association for Friendship with the Peoples of Africa (PRAVDA 2.6.61). Public meetings in support of "the national

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liberation movement of Angola and the other Portuguese colonies" were held in Moscow, Leningrad and Baku (PRAVDA 1. and 3.6.61).

Congo

There were no major Soviet pronouncements on the Congo during the period under review. The main subjects of press reports and comment were the policy of the Stanleyville government, and the situation in Stanleyville; the Coquilhatville conference; Tshombe's detention; and the affray between Ghanaian UN troops and Mobutu forces.

PRAVDA and IZVESTIYA published lengthy dispatches from their Stanleyville correspondents Kolesnichenko and Khokhlov (PRAVDA 4.5.61; IZVESTIYA 23.5.61 and 4.6.61). Kolesnichenko reported an interview with the Stanleyville Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, Desire Uketwengu, about his government's social welfare measures, including pensions for workers, nursing courses for women, and new hospitals and schools. Khokhlov reported that the atmosphere in Stanleyville was tense; armed patrols at every crossing were scrutinizing documents "to see if you are not a Belgian in disguise"; a Belgian had recently been found in possession of a secret radio transmitter; the Belgians had been trying to win over Congolese officers by bribes; the Belgian who a year ago would not shake the hand of a Congolese now squeezed it in a firm and friendly grasp as if to pretend that all was forgotten and forgiven. The best relations existed between the Congolese troops and the Ethiopian UN soldiers, but the conduct of the UN command, which controlled the airport, was very different; quite without warning it had suddenly begun bringing Belgians into Stanleyville, "using the airport for aims which have nothing in common either with the tasks of the UN or with the interests of the Congolese people".

PRAVDA and other newspapers (23.5.61) published accounts of the statement on his government's policy read by Gizenga at a press conference in Stanleyville on 22nd May. Gizenga insisted on the maintenance of the unity of the Congo, on Kasavubu's removal from office for violation of the Constitution, and on the solution of the Congo crisis by the summoning of parliament. PRAVDA (24.5.61) reported the letter sent by the Soviet UN delegate Zorin to the Security Council, supporting the Gizenga government's proposal to convene the Congolese parliament in Kamina, and calling on the UN to take appropriate measures. The Tass correspondent in Stanleyville, G. Fedyashin (IZVESTIYA 3.5.61) reported that the decisions of the "puppets" at the Coquilhatville conference to divide up the Congo into separate states had aroused indignation throughout the Congo, even among supporters of the Kasavubu regime.

The arrest of Tshombe was the subject of complacent comment. K. Smirnov (IZVESTIYA 9.5.61) expressed the view that, while Tshombe represented the interests of "the Belgian colonialists, the Vatican and some British monopolists", Kasavubu and Mobutu were supported by the Americans; Tshombe had the choice of submitting to the "American masters" or leaving the scene.

Algeria

PRAVDA (5.5.61) published the text of the joint statement issued after a meeting of Algerian, French, Moroccan and Tunisian Communists in April, outlining the measures necessary for peace in Algeria. PRAVDA (10, 15 and 17.5.61) also gave much space to the French Communist Party conference of 11th-14th May and to declarations on the subject of Algeria made by speakers.

The Evian-les-Bains talks were covered by special correspondents of PRAVDA and IZVESTIYA. The main tenor of initial Soviet comment on the talks was they they were to be welcomed as offering a prospect of ending hostilities, but that many difficulties lay ahead, particularly if the French insisted on claims to the Sahara, to military bases in Algeria, etc. PRAVDA (21.5.61) reported without comment the French cessation of offensive operations in Algeria, but accompanied this with a report of the FLN statement condemning the French unilateral action as a "propaganda act" which could not affect the Algerian stand on the subject of a negotiated cease-fire. Subsequent Soviet comment (IZVESTIYA 23.5.61) represented the French action as a "manoeuvre" which, intended to create a favourable impression on superficial observers, had in fact not improved but worsened the climate at Evian. PRAVDA (23.5.61) denounced French press claims that the Soviet press had welcomed the French cessation of operations and that all countries including the Soviet Union were "displeased at the stubbornness of the Algerian delegation".

The French authorities organized a two-day visit by foreign correspondents, including the Tass correspondent A. Baranov, to the Oran district, and the latter's impressions of the visit were published in the Soviet press (IZVESTIYA and TRUD 2.6.61). From the point of view of witnessing the French cessation of offensive operations, said the Tass correspondent, the venue was significant; there had in effect been no such operations in that district, since the terrain was not suited to FLN activities. The French administration and army had tried to convince the journalists of France's "civilizing" role in Algeria, and they had been taken to a resettlement centre and to two model villages set up by the army. In fact, however, the inhabitants of these places had themselves belied all the French assertions; sick and poverty-stricken, their children emaciated, living in ramshackle straw huts, they had told how they had been driven here at rifle-point after their homes had been destroyed.

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TRUD (25.5.61) reported that N.A. Mukhitdinov, member of the Praesidium of the CPSU Central Committee, had received Larbi Buhali, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Algerian Communist Party, and had a friendly talk with him.

Other Countries

Libya On 22nd April the Libyan Premier received members of the chambers of commerce of the Azerbaydzhan, Kazakh and Turkmen republics visiting Libya (TURKMENSKAYA ISKRA 25.4.61).

Sudan PRAVDA (24.5.61) reported that President Ibrahim Abbud would arrive in the Soviet Union on an official visit on 17th July.

Somalia The visit to the Soviet Union of the Somali Premier Abd ar-Rashid Ali Sharmarke, from 24th May to 2nd June, was given much publicity in the Soviet press. PRAVDA published the texts of speeches made by Khrushchev and Ali Sharmarke on the latter's arrival and at a luncheon in the Kremlin on 25th May, and speeches made by Mikoyan and Ali Sharmarke at a reception given by the latter on 31st May, at a reception held in the Kremlin on 1st June and on Ali Sharmarke's departure on 2nd June. Ali Sharmarke visited Leningrad, Uzbekistan, Baku and the Crimea. A lengthy Soviet-Somali joint communique (PRAVDA 3.6.61) affirmed the agreement of both sides on international and African issues, and stated that the Soviet Government had agreed to grant the Somali Republic a long-term credit of 40 million rubles on favourable terms for the development of industry and agriculture; a five-year trade credit of 7 million rubles on favourable terms; and free assistance in the construction of two hospitals, a secondary school, a printing works and a radio station. The Soviet Government would send at its own expense to the Somali Republic a group of Soviet doctors and teachers, and would assist in the training of Somali medical personnel in the USSR. Soviet-Somali agreements on economic and technical cooperation, trade and cultural cooperation were signed in the Kremlin on 2nd June.

Ethiopia Messages of greeting on the 20th anniversary of the liberation of Ethiopia were exchanged between Brezhnev and the Emperor Haile Selassie (PRAVDA 13.5.61). An exhibition of Ethiopian art was opened in the State Museum of Eastern Cultures in Moscow on 30th May (PRAVDA 31.5.61).

Senegal S. Zykov, the Paris correspondent of IZVESTIYA, visited Senegal to cover Senegal's Independence Day celebrations (see MIZAN NEWSLETTER No. 5 of 1961, p.29, for report of visit by Soviet Government delegation).

IZVESTIYA published two long articles sent from Paris by Zykov on his return (17. and 24.5.61). In the second of these Zykov wrote in the most scathing terms of the present regime in Senegal. Senegal, he claimed, was independent only in name; business, plantations, the army and the police were still in the hands of Frenchmen; President Senghor and Premier Mamadou Dia were men noted for their services to France; only one party was permitted; fighters for national independence languished in prison as before. The leaders of the governing party, to justify in the eyes of the masses their collaboration with colonialism, had evolved a bogus theory of "African socialism". A four-year plan was in hand, and "mobilization of the masses" was called for; but it was scarcely possible to generate any enthusiasm for a plan which in effect meant giving foreign monopolies control of Senegal's economy.

Mali TURKMENSKAYA ISKRA (5, 6, 7 and 11.5.61) reported the visit of a women's delegation from Mali to Ashkhabad and Mary.

Niger A Tass dispatch, quoting the Yugoslav agency Tanyug (TRUD 10.5.61), reported that the Niger workers' union had passed resolutions demanding the creation of a national Niger army, the evacuation of French bases and the reorganization of the state apparatus, and denouncing the high profits made by foreign trading companies in Niger.

Ghana A Ghanaian military delegation led by Brig. S.J.A. Otu visited the Soviet Union at the invitation of the Soviet Ministry of Defence from 29th April to 10th May (KRASNAYA ZVEZDA 30.4.61 and 5, 6, 10 and 11.5.61).

On 5th May the Soviet Ambassador to Ghana handed over to President Nkrumah the Soviet M-4 helicopter presented to him last year by the Soviet Government on the occasion of the proclamation of the Republic of Ghana (KAZAKHSTANSKAYA PRAVDA 7.5.61).

South Africa The inauguration of the Republic of South Africa was the occasion for a PRAVDA article (30.5.61) denouncing the South African regime; events in South Africa, said PRAVDA, had "assumed proportions which constitute a threat to peace and security in Africa". IZVESTIYA (1.6.61) spoke of the "republican masquerade"; it earlier (26.5.61) briefly reported the call for the stoppage of work by non-Europeans, but the subsequent response to the strike call was not reported. TRUD (25.5.61) reported a resolution passed by the Durban conference on the South African trade union congress, and sent to (among others) the Soviet Trade Union Council, denouncing the ban on meetings of the congress and affirming that the congress had the support of workers of the whole world.

PRAVDA (22.5.61) published an article on "South Africa's struggle" by A.M. Makiwane, member of the African National Congress and the South African United Front. In the course of this article Makiwane spoke of the success of the Pietermaritzburg conference and its endorsement of the policy of the African National Congress; he denounced "the diversionaries and gangsters and former members of the now moribund Pan-African Congress and the Liberal Party" who had "done everything to break up the conference". (Note: The Pan-African Congress delegates withdrew from the conference because it decided on a multi-racial campaign; Makiwane does not explain this.)

Tass (SOVETSKAYA KIRGIZIYA 10.5.61), quoting AFP, reported an appeal to the population of South Africa issued by the underground South African Communist Party. This stated that the party supported the resolution of the Pietermaritzburg conference calling for a multi-racial convention, and appealed to all workers - Africans, Indians, Coloureds and Whites - "to unite in an all-national struggle on the eve of 31st May for higher wages, better living conditions and a free South Africa".

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